



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Addendum #2

**RFP #090192 Questions and Responses for the Mount Haggin WMA Habitat
Restoration Project**

Deadline for Written questions: 12 PM May 1, 2009
Question and Answer period for this RFP is closed.

1) Page 11, Sec. 3.4, #4: Some of these cost items can be included together in contractor bids. For example, road costs, temporary culverts, “clean up” can be part of a logging contractor’s overall bid. Will you allow composite cost analysis?

Response:

This item has been addressed in the addendum #1 to the RFP. In short, the answer is yes, FWP will accept composite cost analysis.

2) Please define terms “clean up” and “rehabilitation”.

Response:

Clean up will include, but may not be limited to, slash disposal, removal of temporary culverts, removal of temporary road signs and other equipment used for the project, and placement of Kelly humps or other such barriers to close roads post-project.

Rehabilitation will include re-contouring and seeding new roads constructed for the project, seeding areas of disturbance (landings, old logging roads bladed open for the project, etc.) and five years of weed control in the project area. Seed mixtures will be native grasses and forbs appropriate for the area and will be purchased with proceeds from the logging. After the first year of weed control which would be overseen by the Forester, i.e. the year the project is conducted, it is expected that a certain amount of proceeds from the logging will be set aside for the purchase of chemical and/or bio-controls and that FWP will continue weed control in the project area for the next 4 years.

3) Page 12, Para 4.3.2, 4.3.4, 4.3.5: Please define timber cruise. Does this mean a formal (and very time consuming) timber inventory is required? This is the only reference to a timber cruise in the RFP. Also, are the June 10th and July 31st deadlines flexible, re: weather problems?

Response:

FWP does not require a formal timber inventory, i.e. timer cruise, to be conducted. An informal approach is sufficient, assuming that it provides the Forester the ability to

develop an appropriate design and lay-out for the Forest Health prescription, according to the Mt. Haggin WMA Habitat Restoration Plan, that can be used to formulate a bid prospectus for the selection of a logging contractor.

The dates stated in the RFP are targets. While the intent is that these dates will be adhered to, concessions will certainly be made for events beyond human control.

4) Page 27, Question 9: This is a very real concern. In the current timber market, it is doubtful whether timber prices can cover the costs of operations plus the habitat improvement aspects (aspen, bitterbrush) and post harvest costs such as 5 years of weed control, as set forth in the RFP. Market conditions are not forecast to improve during this contract period. Does FWP have the flexibility to defer this project for a year in anticipation of market recovery?

Response:

FWP does have the flexibility to defer this project for a year, if market conditions are such in 2009 that logging receipts will not cover costs of implementing all aspects of the project.

5) There may be enough timber revenue to cover the costs of logging operations (including the aspen area conifer removal) but not the bitterbrush encroachment treatment. If the bitterbrush project cannot be funded with timber revenues, will this be a “show stopper”?

Response:

The intent of this project is to improve habitat conditions across the winter range on the WMA, including the selected areas of bitterbrush and to use timber revenue to do so. If this is not feasible, FWP will reconsider how best to accomplish the intent of the project. It is reasonable to assume that one possibility is to not implement any part of the project at this time.

6) Page 28, 37, 38, 39 +: You use the term “licensed” forester throughout the RFP. Montana does not license foresters so this is a misleading term. Likewise, the term “professional” forester is too weak a definition as there are no Montana requirements for a person to call themselves a “professional forester”. Suggest you use the term “certified” forester (Society of American Foresters or Association of Consulting Foresters) certification.

Response:

Point well taken. In future documents, FWP will use the term “certified forester”. With respect to this RFP, “certified forester” is what FWP is seeking.

7) Page 36, Sec 2.1, Aspen: Please specifically define “pole size.” Suggest applying a diameter criterion?

Response:

For this project, “Pole size” refers to trees that are 6 inch diameter at breast height or larger.

8) Page 36, Sec 2.1, Bitterbrush: The requirement to “hand-pull” all seedlings may be excessive over a 100 acre area, unless you define seedling size. Typically a tree is not an established seedling until 6 inches tall. This requirement will make this treatment very expensive. Some areas may have hundreds, even thousands, of small “seedlings” per acre.

Response:

For this project, “seedlings” refers to trees that are at least 6 inches tall.

9) Page 37, Conifer Forest Health, last paragraph: The requirement to broadcast burn the units is not feasible or recommended. Broadcast burning would kill reserve Gou-fir. Also, this requirement is extremely hazardous and, if persisted in, will be very expensive. One requirement may be to completely surround units with caterpillar fireline, which would highly impact the aesthetics and habitat concerns. Best option for slash control is to whole-tree log and burn slash and landings.

Response:

This, and some of these other questions, illuminate the reason FWP is seeking a forester to assist with this project. FWP will look to a certified forester to provide expert opinion on how best to implement this project so that management objectives will be met. If a certified forester does not agree with prescription items as lined out in the Habitat Reforestation Plan, and if this disagreement is based on professional experience and knowledge and better aligns procedures on the ground with the intended objectives of the project, FWP is willing to alter details of the project based on the Forester’s recommendations.

10) Page 38, Add’l Silvicultural Prescriptions: Stump heights – A more normal and usual standard for LLP is 4” stump height, as measured on upslope side of stump. Also, stump heights may deviate in rocky areas, so deviation from the standard should be allowable in small numbers, or with terrain considerations.

Response:

Please see response to #9.

11) Do you want a total of 100' wide buffer or 200' along streams? Please clarify Streamside Buffer:

Response:

200' wide total buffer along streams, with 100' on either side.

12) Page 39, Weed Mgt: Do you intend for logging contractor to supply a 5 year weed control service contract? Will the weed control requirement be limited to roads and landings or over entire treatment area? Please specify.

Response:

Please see response to #1.

13) Page 39, Costs, 1st paragraph: Do I understand correctly that the forester's compensation is paid from a separate budget rather than being covered by timber revenues?

Response:

This is correct.

14) Page 38 and Maps: Excaliner Harvest Method. This requirement may be cost prohibitive. Excaliner logging is about 40% more costly than tractor logging. When this project was conceived, the market was much higher, making excaliner logging feasible. The current market will not likely support profitable excaliner harvest?

Response:

FWP would consider eliminating the Excaliner portion of this project, especially if it was a financial drain on the rest of the project.

15) Who was the forester who recommended the use of an excaliner?

Response:

FWP contracted John Wells last summer to assess the feasibility of doing this project. Based on the July 2008 timber values, Mr. Wells determined excaliner logging to be an option. However, we all recognize that current market conditions have significantly changed from last July and excaliner logging is not likely an option at this point.

16) Page 29. LP treatment areas will be broadcast burn. Will this be contracted out separately? How will this be paid?

Response:

First of all, since the publication of the Decision Notice and the approval of the Final EA for the Mount Haggin WMA Habitat Restoration Project, it has come to FWP's attention that broadcast burning of slash is not the best option and other forms of slash disposal may be better both ecologically and financially. This illuminates the reason FWP is seeking a forester to assist with this project. FWP will look to a certified forester to provide expert opinion on how best to implement this project so that management objectives will be met. If a certified forester does not agree with prescription items as lined out in the Habitat Restoration Plan, and if this disagreement is based on professional experience and knowledge and better aligns procedures on the ground with the intended objectives of the project, FWP is willing to alter details of the project based on the Foresters recommendations.

Regarding how aspects of the project will be paid for, it is the intent of the project that timber receipts will cover the costs of the project, i.e. the aspen, bitterbrush, and forest health components of the project.

17) Page 36: Can there be alternative slash disposal methods of conifers within aspen stands?

Response:

FWP will consider the recommendations of a certified forester, assuming those recommendations meet the objectives of this project.

18) Page 40: Was there a regen survey done to determine how many seedlings to pull within the bitterbrush treatment area. How big is a seedling?

Response:

In July 2008, FWP biologist and botanist conducted vegetation surveys in 4 of the 5 selected bitterbrush treatment areas. Based on results from those surveys, the amount of regen of Douglas fir varies by area – 3 areas were sparse, 1 moderate, and 1 densely populated with Douglas fir seedlings.

For this project, “seedlings” refers to trees that are at least 6 inches tall.

19) Page 38: 4 inch stump heights are not realistic on steep or rocky ground, will there be exceptions?

Response:

Please see response to #9.

20) Page 12: Timber Cruise to be complete by 6/10. this is the only mention of it. Are there specific guidelines for the cruise?

Response:

FWP does not require a formal timber inventory, i.e. timber cruise, to be conducted. An informal approach is sufficient, assuming that it provides the Forester the ability to develop an appropriate design and lay-out for the Forest Health prescription, according to the Mt. Haggin WMA Habitat Restoration Plan, that can be used to formulate a bid prospectus for the selection of a logging contractor.

The dates stated in the RFP are targets. While the intent is that these dates will be adhered to, concessions will certainly be made for events beyond human control.

21) Page 12: From contract award to finishing the cruise and the timber sale lay-out needs to be completed by 6/10. With 5/25 a holiday, depending upon contract award that only leaves 10 days to complete the cruise and layout. Would the State consider extending this period of time (two weeks minimum) and still meet all the other timelines?

Response:

Please see response to #20.

22) Are there topographical maps and photos with unit boundaries available?

Response:

Yes. Digital layers of the project area are available, which could be printed onto topographical maps. There is also a complete set of aerial photos taken in June 2007.